DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 091 729 CS 201 334

TITLE	Composition Opinionnaire: The Student's Right to Write.
INSTITUTION	National Council of Teachers of English, Urbana, Ill. Commission on Composition.
PUB DATE	72
NOTE	9p.; See related documents CS 201 320-375
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.75 HC-$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS	*Composition (Literary); *Educational Research; *English Instruction; Language Arts; *Measurement Instruments; Research Tools; Resource Materials; Student Motivation
IDENTIFIERS	*The Research Instruments Project; TRIP

ABSTRACT

Designed to assess teachers' attitudes toward writing and the teaching of writing, this questionnaire consists of two parts. The first section covers the personal, educational, and professional background of the informant, while the second section contains 55 statements eliciting the informant's opinion--with a range of five options--about composition instruction. [This document is one of those reviewed in The Research Instruments Project (TRIP) monograph "Measures for Research and Evaluation in the English Language Arts" to be published by the Committee on Research of the National Council of Teachers of English in cooperation with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills. A TRIP review which precedes the document lists its category (Teacher Competency), title, authors, and date, and describe the instrument's purpose and physical characteristics.] (JM)

NCTE Committee on Research

The Research Instruments Project (TRIP)

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The attached document contains one of the measures reviewed in the TRIP committee monograph titled:

Measures for Research and Evaluation
in the English Language Arts

TRIP is an acronym which signifies an effort to abstract and make readily available measures for research and evaluation in the English language arts. These measures relate to language development, listening, literature, reading, standard English as a second language or dialect, teacher competencies, or writing. In order to make these instruments more readily available, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills has supported the TRIP committee sponsored by the Committee on Research of the National Council of Teachers of English and has processed the material into the ERIC system. The ERIC Clearinghouse accession numbers that encompass most of those documents are CS 201320-CS 201375.

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CS 201334

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH
1111 KENYON ROAD
URBANA, ILLINOIS 61801

Category: Teacher Competency

Title: Composition Opinionnaire: The Student's Right to Write

Authors: Members of the Commission on Composition, NCTE

Description of the Instrument:

Purpose: To assess teachers' attitudes towards writing and the teaching of writing.

Date of Construction: 1972

Physical Description: Part I of this opinionnaire asks for sixteen items of personal, educational, and professional information. Part II is a Likert-type measure with fifty-five attitude statements like the following:

> Grades are the most effective way of motivating students to improve their writing.
>
> In order to avoid errors in sentence structure, weak students should be encouraged to write only short, simple sentences.
>
> Students should have freedom in selecting the topics for their composition.

Validity, Reliability, and Normative Data:

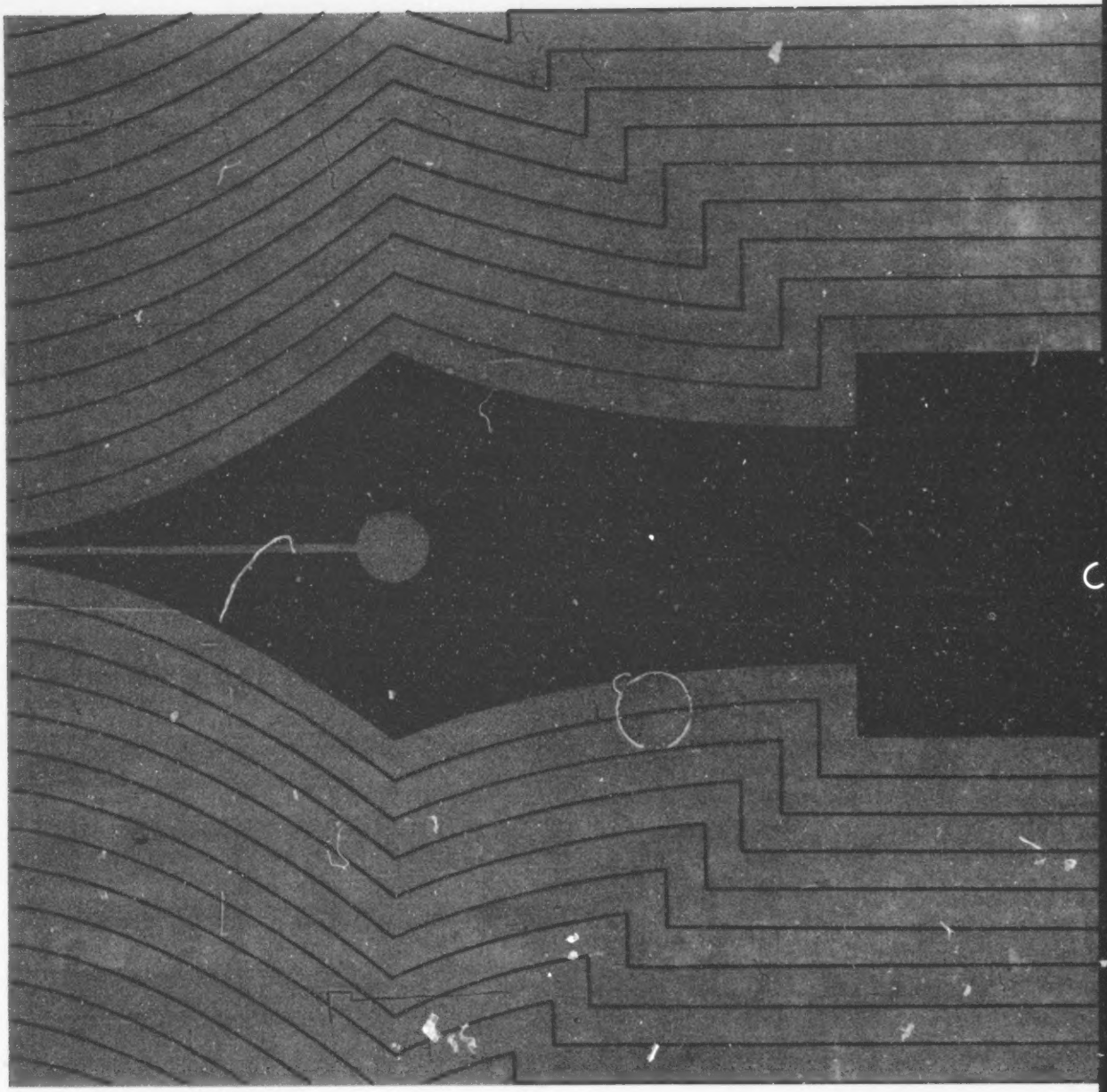
The Commission on Composition obtained 328 responses from around the country, but the sample was too limited and skewed toward college teachers to provide a basis for normative data. No reliability data are reported. The content validity of the opinionnaire derives from the expertness of the members of the Commission on Composition.

Ordering information:

EDRS

Composition Opinionnaire

The Student's Right to Write



A PUBLICATION PREPARED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION ON COMPOSITION
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COMPOSITION OPINIONNAIRE

PART I

Please respond to the following questions:

1. NAME (Optional) SEX: M F AGE

2. In what state(s) have you done most of your teaching?

3. In what state(s) did you do your college work?

4. What is the highest college degree which you hold?

5. What is your college major? Minor?

6. How many college credit hours beyond that degree have you earned?

7. How many college credit hours have you earned in composition? (semester hours)

8. How many college credit hours have you earned in courses on the teaching of composition? (semester hours)

9. How many college credit hours have you earned in courses on grammar? (semester hours)

10. How many years of teaching experience have you had?

11. How many, if any, composition courses as such do you usually teach each semester?

12. What portion of a typical year of work is devoted to the teaching of composition?

13. With what educational level have you had most experience?

Lower Elementary	Senior High
Upper Elementary	College
Junior High	Other

14. At what educational level do you now work?

Lower Elementary	Senior High
Upper Elementary	College
Junior High	Other

15. Do you have assistance in evaluating compositions?
Type of assistance:

16. What type of professional experiences in methods of teaching of composition have you had?
Institute:
Place Date

Inservice:
Type Place Date

COMPOSITION OPINIONNAIRE
PART II

Directions

Check the column that most nearly represents your response to each of the statements that follow.

Strongly Agree means complete, definite agreement.
Agree means definite agreement (nearly so).
Disagree means definite disagreement (nearly so).
Strongly Disagree means complete, definite disagreement.
No opinion means just that (no opinion either way and the response might be described as neutral).

Be sure to check in only one of the spaces for each statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
1. Writing assignments should be more extensive than the specification of a topic or list of topics.					
2. The major obligation of instruction in composition is to help students learn and practice the conventions of standard, educated English.					
3. Grades are the most effective way of evaluating compositions.					
4. In order to insure fairness, specific penalties in grades should be assigned for mechanical errors in compositions—for example, one point off for each spelling error.					
5. Composition programs in the elementary grades should be directed primarily at encouraging students to self-expression.					
6. There is little research evidence that knowledge of grammar and usage will produce improvement in student writing.					
7. By the time they leave high school all students should be able to distinguish clearly among the four forms of discourse: narration, description, exposition, and argumentation.					
8. Grades are the most effective way of motivating students to improve their writing.					
9. Correct English is established by the logical grammatical relationships within the language.					
10. Rhetoric as it is pertinent to the composition course concerns only the manner of writing or speaking, not the matter.					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
11. Successful writing is achieved only if all themes are carefully corrected by the teacher.					
12. The techniques of writing and documenting a formal research paper should be taught in high school to all college-bound students.					
13. Assignments during the last two years of high school should require primarily expository writing.					
14. Film-making is a useful activity for the writing course for teaching the basic principles of composition.					
15. Since composition is part of the traditional English course, writing assignments should require the student to write exclusively about literature.					
16. High school students who are able to consistently write correct English should not be required to do further work in composition.					
17. Composition courses should include instruction in viewing film and television and reading newspapers and magazines.					
18. High school students should be discouraged from using figurative language because their efforts at metaphor so often produce only cliches.					
19. In order to avoid errors in sentence structure, weak students should be encouraged to write only short, simple sentences.					
20. Students should be required to prepare written outlines before they begin writing expository papers.					
21. Students can improve their writing by learning devices for strengthening the continuity of thought from one sentence to the next.					
22. Students should not be allowed to begin sentences with *and, or, for,* or *but.*					
23. Students should be discouraged from using the first person pronoun in their compositions.					
24. Every good paragraph should have a concluding sentence or "clincher."					
25. The English course for junior high school should include a research paper so that students can learn how to use the library and source materials for papers in their other courses.					
26. Growth in writing in the elementary school is enhanced by a broad and rich program of literature.					
27. Grading a paper or a course with a single letter grade informs no one as to the values sought whether those of style, content, mechanical accuracy or a combination of these elements.					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
28. The experience of composing can and should nurture the pupil's quest for self-realization and his need to relate constructively to his peers.					
29. Children and young adults, like other writers, compose largely for an audience, and the response of this audience is strategic in their growth toward more mature literacy.					
30. The teacher-pupil conference can and should aid the learner in finding his strengths and encourage him in correcting some of his weaknesses.					
31. Class and teacher comment on expository writing and other forms of factual composing should emphasize content.					
32. Growth in writing throughout a year's span and over still longer periods is marked by spurts rather than by equal or nearly equal increments.					
33. Teachers should write all the compositions that they assign to students.					
34. Students who speak freely, fluently, and effectively are generally good writers.					
35. Students should often "talk out" their compositions prior to the writing.					
36. Composition programs in the elementary grades should be designed primarily to help students learn to discipline their writing and develop awareness of accepted standards of good prose.					
37. Evaluation should be individualized; standards set for one student may be inappropriate for other students in the same class.					
38. Teachers should correct errors on students' papers.					
39. Students should rewrite each paper regardless of the number or kind of errors.					
40. Every error on a student's composition should be indicated.					
41. Able pupils tend to explore different forms and styles of expression and show more variation in quality from one written product to another than do less able pupils.					
42. Students should be asked to evaluate and grade their own papers as well as those of other students.					
43. Students should have freedom in selecting the topics for their compositions.					
44. Differing teaching approaches must be used for teaching factual writing or objectively oriented writing and for teaching subjectively-oriented imaginative material.					
45. School and community expectations in control of mechanics can be reasonably well learned in pupil-and-teacher editing of materials written for public readership.					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
46. If a majority of pupils in elementary and high school classes do not produce voluntary writing, the composition program obviously has too many features threatening and destructive to a positive self-image and to potential for writing.					
47. Students' oral language should be corrected so that the correct forms will appear in their writing.					
48. The major purpose of evaluating compositions is to guide individual student growth and development.					
49. Compositions written in class should never be given letter grades.					
50. Students should be required to write at least one paper each week.					
51. Growth in written self-expression depends in part upon a wide range of first-hand experiences.					
52. Instruction in composition should give students a clear idea of their ways of composing. That is, students should be aware of what they go through to produce writing.					
53. Correct English should be required of all students in the high school.					
54. Creative dramatization, role playing, and pantomime are interesting forms of release but have little effect on written composition.					
55. If students are given freedom in composing, they will discover various types of writing for themselves.					